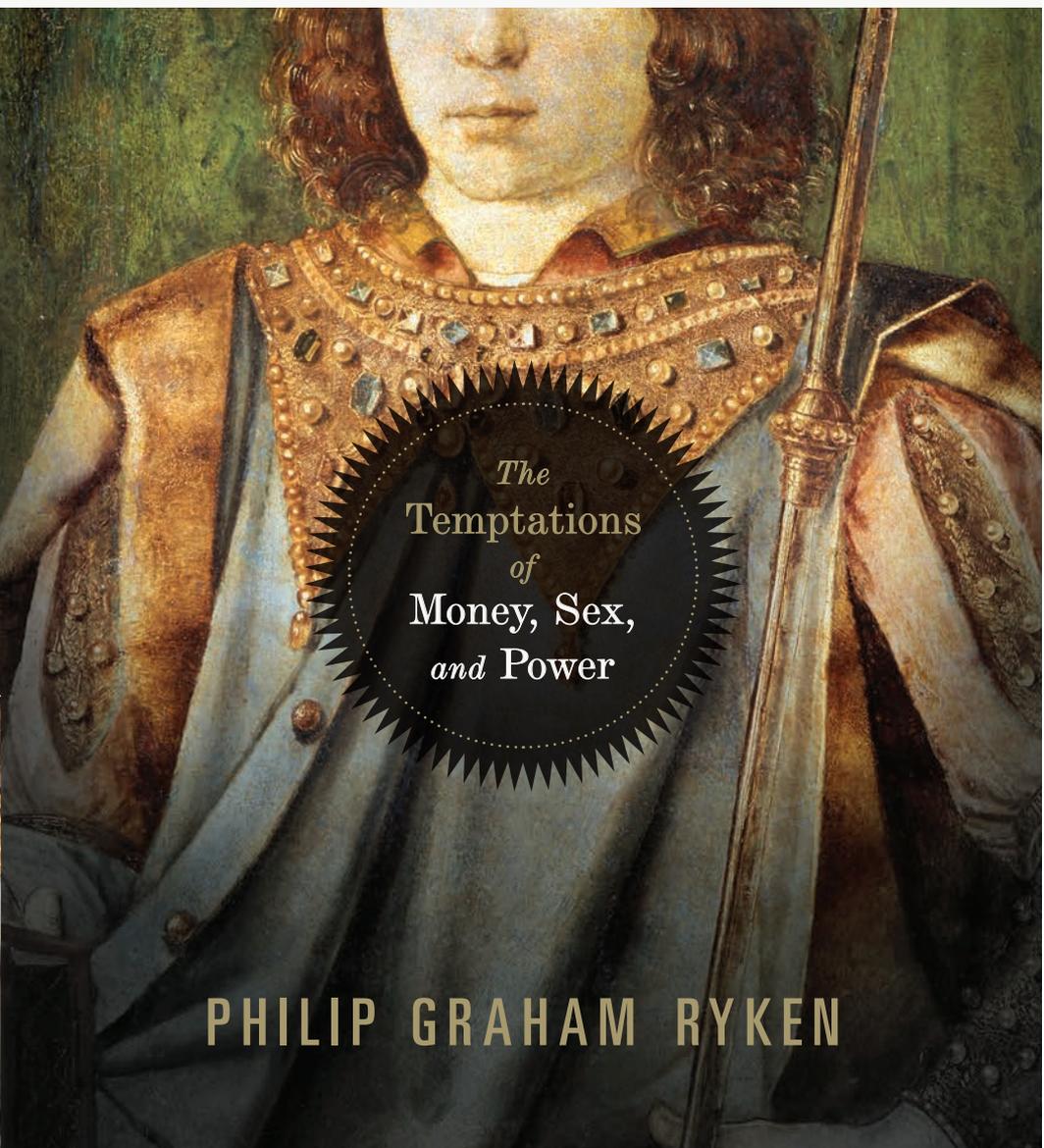




K I N G   S O L O M O N



*The*  
Temptations  
*of*  
Money, Sex,  
*and* Power

PHILIP GRAHAM RYKEN

OTHER CROSSWAY BOOKS

by Philip Graham Ryken

*Justification* (A Gospel Coalition booklet)

*Our Triune God: Living in the Love of the  
Three-in-One* (co-author)

*The Prayer of Our Lord*

*Written in Stone: The Ten Commandments and  
Today's Moral Crisis*

IN THE PREACHING THE WORD  
COMMENTARY SERIES:

*Ecclesiastes: Why Everything Matters*

*Exodus: Saved for God's Glory*

*Jeremiah and Lamentations: From Sorrow to Hope*

---

K I N G   S O L O M O N

---



PHILIP GRAHAM RYKEN

 **CROSSWAY**  
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

*King Solomon: The Temptations of Money, Sex, and Power*

Copyright © 2011 by Philip Graham Ryken

Published by Crossway

1300 Crescent Street  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided for by USA copyright law.

Cover design: Dual Identity inc.

Cover painting: Scala / Art Resource, NY

First printing 2011

Printed in the United States of America

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (*The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway. Used by permission. All rights reserved

Scripture quotations marked KJV are from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Scripture references marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 Biblica. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. The “NIV” and “New International Version” trademarks are registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica. Use of either trademark requires the permission of Biblica.

All emphases in Scripture quotations have been added by the author.

Trade paperback ISBN: 978-1-4335-2154-6

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-2155-3

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-2167-6

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-2168-3

---

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Ryken, Philip Graham, 1966–

King Solomon : the temptations of money, sex, and power / Philip Graham Ryken.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 978-1-4335-2154-6 (tp)

1. Solomon, King of Israel. 2. Money—Biblical teaching. 3. Sex—Biblical teaching. 4. Power (Christian theology)—Biblical teaching.

I. Title.

BS580.S6R95 2011

222'.53092—dc22

2010053231

---

Crossway is a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

VP	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11			
14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

# C O N T E N T S

Preface	11
1 Long Live the King!	15
2 Putting the Kingdom First	27
3 Solomon's Wish	43
4 The Wisdom of Solomon	59
5 The Peaceable Kingdom	73
6 Inside Solomon's Temple	87
7 Better Homes and Gardens	101
8 The Ark of the Covenant and the Glory	115
9 Solomon's Choice	129
10 Solomon and the Queen of Sheba	143
11 <i>Sic Transit Gloria Mundi</i>	157
12 A Royal Tragedy	171
13 The Fall of the House of David	187
Solomon's Epitaph	203
Study Guide	209
Notes	237
General Index	243
Scripture Index	249



# P R E F A C E

As I write these words, the news in America is dominated by the story of a spectacular tragedy: the world-famous golfer Tiger Woods has fallen into public disgrace.

For more than a decade now, Woods has been one of the most admired men in the world. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest players in the history of golf—maybe *the* greatest. Tall, strong, and handsome, he married a stunningly beautiful woman. By virtue of his championship play and reputation for excellence, he has made hundreds of millions of dollars in prizes and endorsements.

Yet now Tiger seems to have lost everything. First came the report of a mysterious late-night car accident at the family compound in Florida. This was soon followed by accusations of marital discord and sexual infidelity. Every day the tabloids, the newspapers, and the television programs reported another tawdry liaison with a waitress, an escort, or a Las Vegas hooker.

The consequences of these transgressions were devastating. Woods went from being one of the most admired men in the world to being one of the most despised. His wife and children left him. Despite a public apology, the man's reputation was destroyed, probably permanently. Tiger's career as a golfer went on indefinite hiatus. His sponsors abandoned him, costing him millions of dollars in promotional fees. In short, his life was ruined.

What was the cause of Tiger's downfall? It was partly due to adultery. Unable to resist forbidden pleasure, he gave in to sexual temptation. Money may also have had something to do with it. Because of his extraordinary wealth, Tiger could go places and do things that most people could only dream of, and wherever he went, some women were ready to throw themselves at him. Tiger's transgressions also represented an abuse of power. Because of his position in life, he simply

## *Preface*

assumed that he could get away with doing whatever he wanted. The temptations that brought Tiger down are the same temptations that have ruined many famous people: money, sex, and power.

What happened to the world's most famous golfer ought to sound familiar to anyone who knows the story of Solomon. Like Tiger Woods, King Solomon had all the fame and fortune that any man could want. He was the world's wisest and wealthiest king. And yet, tragically, he threw it all away. Rather than remaining true to the living God, his heart was led astray by the treasures of wealth, the pleasures of sex, and the powers of an earthly kingdom.

This book traces Solomon's life from his coronation to his burial. Earlier, in the back story to his kingship, we see men struggling with the same temptations that Solomon later faced: money, sex, and power. They are the same temptations that we all face. In witnessing Solomon's moral triumphs and sinful failures, therefore, we learn how to live more wisely. By the grace of God, we may avoid a tragic downfall of our own and learn how to use money, sex, and power for the glory of God.

Most of the material in this book was first preached at Philadelphia's Tenth Presbyterian Church, where it was my joy to serve in pastoral ministry for fifteen years. I am grateful to the good friends who made many helpful suggestions as I revised the manuscript for publication: Lois Denier, Cathy Kempf, Glenn McDowell, Robert Polen, Mary Ryken, and Lydia Brownback. Special thanks go to my little sister Nancy Taylor, who prepared the study guide.

In studying the life of Solomon, we see both the true greatness and the tragic failure of our own humanity. We are made in the royal image of God, yet we have fallen into serious sin. Fortunately, there is someone who can still save us: the greater Solomon of the kingdom of God. When Jesus said, "Something greater than Solomon is here" (Luke 11:31), he was referring to his own perfect life and ministry. Jesus Christ is the hope which Solomon's tragedy shows that all of us need.

Philip Graham Ryken  
Wheaton, Illinois



---

# LONG LIVE THE KING!

---

*And the king said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’”*

1 KINGS 1 : 33 – 34

The story of King Solomon begins with King David, who “was old and advanced in years. And although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm” (1 Kings 1:1). For anyone who admires King David, this scene is full of pathos. David was among the greatest of earthly kings—maybe *the* greatest. From boyhood he performed many heroic feats in battle. He killed lions and bears to defend his father’s flocks and herds. He slew giants. He conquered kingdoms. He established a fortress for his people in Jerusalem. He sired a royal dynasty, fathering many sons to be the princes of Israel, including Prince Solomon. But now the famous king was old and gray, and for all his former greatness, it was all he could do to stay warm in bed (or should I say deathbed?).

## OLD KING DAVID

David’s feeble decline is a sad reminder of our own frailty. The king was about seventy years old when these events took place.

## K I N G   S O L O M O N

What happened to him will happen to (almost) all of us. Our hearing will fail; our eyesight will grow dim; our limbs will get weak and brittle. Eventually we will be confined to bed, and maybe we will find it hard to stay warm. How important it is, therefore, for everyone to heed the counsel that Solomon later gave, in the days of his wisdom: “Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, ‘I have no pleasure in them’” (Eccles. 12:1). If, like David, we give our hearts to God when we are young, we will still remember him when we are old, and he will remember us.

Poor David! As he tried to get warm, his servants tried to help. They put him in warmer pajamas, but the king was still cold. Then they piled heavy blankets on his royal person, but still he shivered under the covers. So they proposed a practical remedy—one mentioned in several ancient medical textbooks:<sup>1</sup>

His servants said to him, “Let a young woman be sought for my lord the king, and let her wait on the king and be in his service. Let her lie in your arms, that my lord the king may be warm.” So they sought for a beautiful young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. The young woman was very beautiful, and she was of service to the king and attended to him, but the king knew her not. (1 Kings 1:2–4)

Abishag’s employment as a kind of human hot water bottle raises more questions than it answers. Were David’s servants simply trying to keep him warm? If so, then why did they conduct a Miss Israel pageant to find the prettiest young thing in the whole country? The situation seems charged with sexuality, and even though we are told that David did not have sexual relations with this woman, there is a lingering sense of impropriety.

We also sense that the king is diminished. This is hardly the David who knew Bathsheba—the David who fathered Solomon and many other sons. Not even a stunning young virgin can warm

## *Long Live the King!*

his blood. On the contrary, he has suffered the loss of vitality and virility.

As David's kingship came to an end, his royal court was full of intrigue. The courtiers were whispering in the passageways: "Who will be the next king?" This question had been on people's minds for years, much the way that people have speculated about who will succeed England's Elizabeth II. In fact, there had already been at least two attempts to take the throne away from David: the rebellion of his son Absalom, which led to civil war (2 Samuel 14–18), and the uprising of Sheba the Benjamite (2 Samuel 20). David was able to quell both of those rebellions, but as he grew older he also grew weaker. Now he couldn't even get warm in bed, and what one scholar has described as "his shivering impotence" was creating a power vacuum.<sup>2</sup>

As far as God was concerned, David's rightful heir was supposed to be Solomon. Although Solomon was not the oldest son—he was tenth in line—he was the chosen son. God does not always choose the oldest son, as David's own coronation illustrates (1 Sam. 16:10–13). We know that the word of the Lord had announced to David that Solomon would be the king: "Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his surrounding enemies. For his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days. He shall build a house for my name. He shall be my son, and I will be his father, and I will establish his royal throne in Israel forever" (1 Chron. 22:9–10). By divine right, Solomon would be Israel's king.

There was another contender for the kingship, however—an alternative candidate to sit on Israel's throne. Most people saw him as the heir apparent. His name was Adonijah, and he seemed to be everything that David used to be but wasn't anymore. The Bible describes him as "a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom" (1 Kings 1:6). Humanly speaking, Adonijah had everything going for him. He had all the qualifications that people look for. Like his older brother Absalom (an ominous connection), he was easy on the eyes, which counts for a lot in life—more than

## K I N G S O L O M O N

we sometimes like to admit. As far as kingship was concerned, Adonijah looked the part (at least to people who look at outward appearances, which God doesn't; 1 Sam. 16:7). Furthermore, as David's oldest living son, Adonijah was next in line for the throne.

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR A CORONATION

According to ancient custom, the death of a ruler is greeted with the following words: "The king is dead; long live the king!" This may seem like a contradictory thing to say. If the king is dead, then what use is there in wishing him long life? But the point is that the kingdom will endure. Even though one king is dead, another king lives to take his place. The kingship will survive, and therefore people who hope for the continuity of the monarchy say, "The king is dead. Long live the king!"

This custom helps to explain what Queen Bathsheba said to King David, as she sought to secure the throne for Solomon as Israel's rightful king. The old king was having trouble getting warm, so everyone thought he was on his deathbed. His oldest son, Adonijah, had gone so far as to proclaim himself the next king (1 Kings 1:5–10). Meanwhile, the prophet Nathan had been doing everything he could do to secure the throne for Solomon, whom God had promised would sit on David's throne. Together Nathan and Bathsheba went to inform David what was happening to his kingdom and to persuade him to crown Solomon as king. Once he had promised to do this, "Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground and paid homage to the king and said, 'May my lord King David live forever!'" (v. 31).

Under the circumstances, this may seem like a strange thing to say. The very reason David and Bathsheba were having this conversation was that they both knew that the king *wouldn't* live forever; he was about to die. So why did she say this? Bathsheba still hoped in the promise of David's everlasting kingdom. The king still lives and so does his dynasty, to the everlasting joy of all the people of God.

David may have been dying, but he was not dead yet. As soon

## *Long Live the King!*

as he finished his audience with Bathsheba, he started giving orders. There was not a moment to lose. In trying to usurp the throne, Adonijah had already announced that he would be king. David knew that it was now or never: if he did not act immediately and decisively to put Solomon on the throne, his son would never become king.

So the king resumed command. He said, “Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada” (v. 32). This was a shrewd and godly maneuver. David was calling together the prophet, the priest, and the representative of the king. Adonijah had not consulted any of these men, but David did, and in doing so he united his kingdom under the rule of God, who had appointed them to serve as the rulers of Israel. Then David gave the orders for Solomon’s coronation. Here were his royal instructions:

Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, “Long live King Solomon!” You shall then come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, for he shall be king in my place. And I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah. (vv. 33–35)

We can tell that the king was used to giving orders and that he knew exactly what to do. First Solomon would ride on David’s personal mule—the royal mule, the one that signified his kingship. Riding a mule or donkey was an ancient symbol of royal office. By comparison, seeing Solomon riding a mule would be like seeing the Queen of England in her royal carriage or watching Air Force One take off with the president of the United States.<sup>3</sup> The king was on parade in all his royal dignity.

Then Solomon would be anointed—the sacred ritual that officially consecrated him as the next king. This was in keeping with the will of God, who, as we have seen, had promised that Solomon would rule on David’s throne. Anointing was also a custom; Israel’s first two kings—Saul and David—had both been anointed with

## K I N G S O L O M O N

oil (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13). Now Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet would pour sacred oil on Solomon's head, divinely designating him as the new king for the people of God.

Next came Solomon's enthronement. Loud trumpets would announce his royal approach to David's throne. With shouts of acclamation, people would proclaim his kingship: "Long live King Solomon!" Then Israel's leaders would follow their new ruler to Israel's throne, where he would sit in the kingly place of David.

This was the right way for King David to announce his immediate successor and for the leaders of Israel to make Solomon their king. David had always called Solomon his beloved son; now he was the first to proclaim him as king. He did it by his royal authority as God's representative, and he did it in broad daylight. Unlike Adonijah, who hosted his own private coronation, Solomon would be paraded through the city streets and crowned at the royal palace—not by his own will but by godly men acting under the will of God. This was the proper way to conduct a coronation: with a royal mule on kingly parade, with holy oil for sacred anointing, with loud shouts and blaring trumpets, and with the new king seated on his golden throne.

### CROWN HIM!

Once David had given these orders, people had a choice to make. It is the same choice we face every day in the Christian life: will we accept the King that God has anointed, submitting to his rule for our lives, or will we put ourselves on the throne, living by the rules of some other kingdom?

First Kings 1 shows what choice people made when David said that Solomon would be king. The people who accepted David's authority as the royal will of God immediately moved to crown Solomon as king. We sense their joy in the marvelous answer that Benaiah the son of Jehoiada gave to the king: "Amen! May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, say so. As the LORD has been with my lord the king, even so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David" (vv. 36–37).

## *Long Live the King!*

With a heart full of joy, Benaiah said “Amen!” to the coronation of Solomon, making his choice for the kingdom of God. He honored King David by agreeing with his instructions. He honored King Solomon by affirming his kingship. And he honored God as the Lord of all kings by recognizing his sovereignty over all these events. Benaiah was for the King and for his kingdom.

Benaiah was also a man of prayer, for that is what he was really doing: praying for the kingdom to come. He was asking God to help David’s plans come to fruition. He was asking God to be with Solomon the way he had always been with David. And he was asking God to expand his kingdom by blessing Solomon even more than he had ever blessed David. Benaiah had the vision to see the glory of the coming kingdom, and he prayed accordingly, asking God to enlarge the greatness of David’s dominion. He asked God to do more than he hoped or imagined, and in doing so he honored David, honored Solomon, and honored their God.

Yet Benaiah was not the only person who chose the right king. The Bible says further that “Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David’s mule and brought him to Gihon. There Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon” (vv. 38–39). These men carefully followed David’s royal instructions. The prophet, the priest, and the representative of the king helped Solomon onto the royal mule. They were joined by David’s “mighty men” (v. 8), his own personal troops.<sup>4</sup> Together these men brought him to the holy tent where the priest kept his sacred oil for ritual anointing. Thus they anointed Solomon as king.

Immediately his kingship received the acclamation that it deserved. The whole kingdom was choosing for Solomon. The priests “blew the trumpet, and all the people said, ‘Long live King Solomon!’ And all the people went up after him, playing on pipes, and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth was split by their noise” (vv. 39–40).

## K I N G   S O L O M O N

The repetition of the royal refrain functions as the climax of 1 Kings 1. What joy it was to see King Solomon take this throne on that happy day! News of his coronation spread through the city like wildfire, and soon everyone was following his parade. Musicians were blowing trumpets. Grown men were cheering and shouting. Women were singing and dancing in the streets. Children were jumping up and down, so excited they hardly knew what to do. The sound of their celebration was almost loud enough to start an earthquake. This is the way to welcome a king: with royal pomp, regal circumstance, and public celebration—something most people would be fortunate to witness just once in a lifetime.

Even old King David could feel the joy. The king was still too weak to get up out of bed, but later we are told that “the king’s servants came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, ‘May your God make the name of Solomon more famous than yours, and make his throne greater than your throne.’ And the king bowed himself on the bed. And the king also said, ‘Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has granted someone to sit on my throne this day, my own eyes seeing it’” (vv. 47–48).

When these servants prayed that Solomon’s kingdom would surpass David’s, they were not insulting their master but honoring God’s promise to give him a royal dynasty (see 2 Sam. 7:12–16). God would indeed expand his kingdom, and David rejoiced to see the day. Right then and there, while he was still on his bed, he bowed down to worship God and to bless him for the gift of Solomon’s kingship. David didn’t have to be the greatest king with the most famous kingdom. What he wanted to see was the glory of the kingdom of God. Far from envying his son, therefore, David praised God for the newly anointed king of his future kingdom.

## THE CORONATION OF THE CHRIST

Almost every detail of this coronation celebration helps us understand the kingship of Jesus Christ—his anointing, his enthronement, and his everlasting dominion. Most people have never witnessed a

## *Long Live the King!*

real live coronation. In the United States we have never crowned anyone king at all. But proper kings are supposed to be crowned, and in telling us how Solomon was crowned, 1 Kings 1 also helps us understand the coronation of Christ as king.

Jesus of Nazareth was the rightful heir of David's throne. As the Gospel of Matthew tells us in its famous genealogy, Jesus was a lineal descendant of Solomon and of David by way of Bathsheba (1:6–7). Thus he had a rightful claim to David's throne. And when it was time for his kingship to be openly acknowledged, Jesus rode a royal donkey into the kingdom city of Jerusalem (Matt. 21:1–11). It had long been promised that the Christ would ride the foal of a donkey (Zech. 9:9). So when Jesus rode a donkey on the first Palm Sunday, making his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, it was a public declaration of his royal office. The King was on parade.

King Jesus was also anointed. Indeed, this is the very meaning of the word *Christ*, which is literally “the Anointed One.” Jesus was not anointed by a prophet or a priest but by the Spirit of God. This took place at his baptism in the Jordan River, when the Holy Spirit descended from heaven like a dove and rested on the Son of God (Matt. 3:16; Luke 3:21–22). As Jesus later said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me” (Luke 4:18).

This shows the superiority of Christ's kingship. The oil that the prophets and the priests used to anoint the Old Testament kings was a sign of the Spirit; it showed that God the Holy Spirit had appointed and equipped the king to serve as king. But Jesus was anointed with the Spirit himself—the third person of the Trinity. His kingship was not simply a sign of God's kingly rule, therefore, but the living reality of God's dominion. The divine King was divinely anointed for divine rule.

Eventually, like King Solomon, King Jesus was enthroned, taking his place at the right hand of God on the throne of the universe. But first something strange happened—something that never happened to any other king of any other kingdom: the King with the crown of thorns went to the cross, where he gave his life to save his people.

## K I N G   S O L O M O N

Most kingdoms do anything they can to protect their king. This is the unspoken premise of the game of chess, for example. When the king falls, the kingdom is lost. Therefore, the king must be protected at all costs. A notable example comes from the Allied invasion of Normandy on D-day, June 6, 1944. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill desperately wanted to join the expeditionary forces and watch the invasion from the bridge of a battleship in the English Channel. US General Dwight David Eisenhower was desperate to stop him for fear that the prime minister might be killed in battle. When it became apparent that Churchill would not be dissuaded, Eisenhower appealed to a higher authority: King George VI. The king went and told Churchill that if it was the prime minister's duty to witness the invasion, he could only conclude that it was also his own duty as king to join him on the battleship. At this point Churchill reluctantly agreed to back down, for he knew that he could never expose the king of England to such danger.

King Jesus did exactly the opposite. With royal courage he surrendered his body to be crucified. On the cross he offered a king's ransom: his life for the life of his people. He would die for all the wrong things that we had ever done, completely atoning for all our sins. And Jesus would do this as our king. The crown of thorns that was meant to make a mockery of his royal claims actually proclaimed his kingly dignity, even in death.

When Jesus died on the cross, Satan and all the enemies of God could say, "The King is dead!" But that is not the end of the story, because on the third day God said, "Long live the King!" and Jesus came right up from the grave. Soon he was royally enthroned, as God fulfilled his ancient promise to the house of David. God the Father said to God the Son, "Sit at my right hand" (Ps. 110:1). He "highly exalted" his Son, giving him all authority over everything in heaven and earth (Phil. 2:9–11). What joy there must have been in heaven when the Son of God ascended to his throne! What shouts of triumph! What blasts of trumpets! What songs of praise! His throne is greater than the throne of David and Solomon. It is superior to all

## *Long Live the King!*

other dominions, for Jesus Christ sits forever on the royal throne of heaven as king over all—the royal king that God anointed.

We too may acclaim him as our king. We may do this the way Benaiah did it: saying “amen” to the kingship of Jesus Christ and praying for his kingdom to increase. Every time we pray for the kingdom to come, and for the gospel to reach our friends and neighbors, and for the church to grow around the world, we honor Christ as king. We may also acknowledge the kingship of Christ with our worship, as people did in the streets of Jerusalem. Whether we are men, women, or children, we can all make music for our King, honoring Christ with joyful music and loud songs of praise. This is how we serve Christ and his kingdom: by enthroning Jesus in our hearts and saying, “Long live the King!”

Our King still lives. Eventually David died and so did Solomon. But Jesus rose from the dead to give everlasting life to David, to Solomon, and to all his royal sons and daughters. There will never be an inter-regnum in the kingdom of God, because Jesus Christ is the immortal king of all ages.

Now everyone who belongs to the kingdom of David by choosing for Christ can say, “The King is dead; long live the King!” Long live the King who welcomes the unworthy! Long live the King who died for sinners! Long live the King who rose from the grave! Long live the King who is coming again! For God has given us this promise: “Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore” (Isa. 9:7). Long live the King, and all the loyal subjects of his royal kingdom, who live by faith in the Son of God.



# STUDY GUIDE

## CHAPTER 1: LONG LIVE THE KING!

We've all seen pictures of the glorious coronation of Queen Elizabeth II or previous monarchs. In recent history, the blood lines are usually undisputed and the next monarch in line rises to power peacefully. But in Solomon's day, when the Israelite monarchy was brand new, there was a scramble for power when a monarch died. Things were up for grabs, and other members of the royal family could make a play for the throne. That's what was happening at the beginning of 1 Kings, when King David was near death.

- 1) Think back to pictures you've seen of coronations. What are some of the necessary props and ceremonies of a coronation?
- 2) Read 1 Kings 1:32–53. Just before these verses, in 1 Kings 1:5–10, Adonijah son of Haggith set himself up as king. Beginning in verse 32, we see what David did when he found out what Adonijah had done. What does David's response to Adonijah's efforts to usurp the throne tell us about David?
- 3) What signs did David arrange to show that Solomon was the new king (see vv. 32–35)?
- 4) What did Benaiah pray for Solomon in verses 36–37? What did his prayer show about his heart response to Solomon's kingship?
- 5) When the people of Israel saw Solomon on David's mule and saw the anointing by the priest and heard the trumpet, they had no doubt who

## *Study Guide*

David thought the next king should be. According to verses 39–40, how did they respond? What does their response tell us about their hearts?

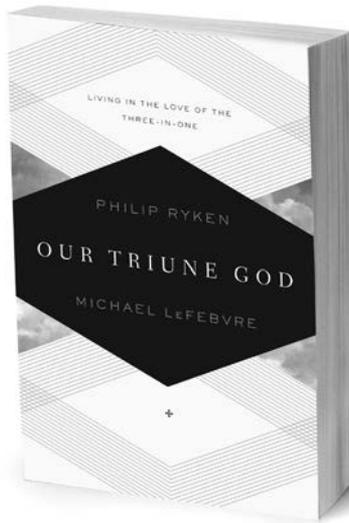
- 6) Jesus is the ultimate king of Israel, and his story has many parallels to the coronation scene in 1 Kings 1. Read Matthew 21:1–11 and Matthew 27:27–31, then fill in the chart below with the similarities and differences you see between these two stories.

	Solomon's Coronation	Jesus's Triumphal Entry
Mode of transportation		
Anointing—who did the anointing?		
Reaction of the crowd		
“Celebration” or crowning		

- 7) In this chapter we noted one key difference between Solomon’s coronation and the ascent of Jesus to his throne in heaven. What is so unique about Jesus’s exaltation? What had to happen first, and why?
- 8) Like the people of Solomon’s day and the people of Jesus’s day, we have a choice to make about who our king will be. If we choose Jesus for our king, what are some effects this will have on the way we live our lives? Have you made that choice?
- 9) When Adonijah learned that Solomon had been anointed king, he realized that his own reign was over. What did he do (v. 50)? Why did he do this? (See Ex. 21:12–14.)
- 10) How would you describe Solomon’s response to Adonijah in verses 52–53? What character traits does he show here?



NOW AVAILABLE



# OUR TRIUNE GOD

LIVING IN THE LOVE OF THE  
THREE-IN-ONE

“A delightful book that will help us to better understand the great truth of the Trinity; one God in three Persons. Better yet, it should cause us to grow in our appreciation of the distinct works of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in our salvation and sanctification. I heartily commend this book.”

JERRY BRIDGES, author, *The Pursuit of Holiness*

“In this book, the authors bring that affirmation to life by showing us that the Trinity is not just a doctrine to be believed but a relationship to be experienced and enjoyed. Pastors, teachers, and believers everywhere will be refreshed and challenged by this stirring call to a deeper participation in the love of the triune God.”

GERALD BRAY, Research Professor of Divinity, Beeson Divinity School

“Ryken and LeFebvre’s *Our Triune God* fills a void in Christian literature. The chapters are formed as carefully reasoned expositions on the subject of the Trinity, and as such, this book provides us with a model worth emulating across the spectrum of systematic categories.”

DAVID R. HELM, Pastor, Holy Trinity Church, Chicago; Chairman, The Charles Simeon Trust

King Solomon had all the fame and fortune that any man could want. He was the world's wisest and wealthiest king. And yet, tragically, he threw it all away for the love of money, the pleasures of sex, and the powers of an earthly kingdom.

In studying the life of Solomon, we see both the true greatness and the tragic failure of our own humanity—from godly devotion to self-serving excess. Even in the midst of our best intentions, we are all prone to succumb to the same temptations of money, sex, and power. And if Solomon's incredible wisdom could not prevent him from such tragic mistakes, then how are we to triumph over the same temptations?

Philip Graham Ryken shows us how, by the grace of God, to prevent those downfalls and to seek God's glory amid earthly temptations through this rich, Christ-centered study of the life of Solomon.

.....

“Articulate and challenging, Ryken brings fresh insight to familiar problems from less familiar passages of Scripture. With power and practicality he helps us understand why these temptations are so great but why Christ is greater still.”

**JAMES MACDONALD**, Senior Pastor, Harvest Bible Chapel, Chicagoland area; radio teacher, *Walk in the Word*

“Vintage Ryken: full of truth, wisdom, and insight . . . A great read, an insightful meditation on Solomon, and a case for maintaining godliness in the midst of the pressure of success well made.”

**JOSH MOODY**, Senior Pastor, College Church, Wheaton, Illinois; author, *No Other Gospel*

.....

**PHILIP GRAHAM RYKEN** is the president of Wheaton College and, prior to that, served as senior minister at Philadelphia's historic Tenth Presbyterian Church. He has written several books, including *The Prayer of our Lord* and *The Heart of the Cross*, and has lectured and taught at universities and seminaries worldwide.

CHRISTIAN LIVING

**CROSSWAY**  
www.crossway.org